

REMARKS

The Office Action dated April 23, 2004, included the following rejections, objections, and comments:

1. Claim 3 was rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Brumlik.
2. Claim 4 was rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Okabe.
3. Claim 5 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being obvious over Okabe.
4. Claims 1 and 2 were indicated to be in a condition for allowance.

In response to these rejections, objections, and comments, and in view of the above Amendments, Applicant provides the following Remarks:

1. Rejection of Claim 3 under 35 USC § 102(b)

Claim 3 has been cancelled. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection has become moot.

2. Rejection of Claim 4 under 35 USC § 102(b)

Claim 4 has been cancelled. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection has become moot.

3. Rejection of Claim 5 under 35 USC § 103(a)

Claim 5 has been cancelled. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection has become moot.

4. Allowability of Claims 1 and 2, and New Dependent Claims

The Office Action included a statement that Claims 1 and 2 were allowed. Applicant wishes to express its appreciation to the Examiner for this disposition.

New Claims 8 – 12 have been added which depend from Claim 1, and new Claims 13 – 18 have been added which depend from Claim 2.

New Claims 7 and 13 require fibrils extending from the distal end. Support for this limitation can be found on page 3, lines 27-28, page 4, lines 17-20, and various other locations in the specification.

Claims 9, 11, 15, and 17 require fibrils extending from the sidewalls of the pile fibers. Support for this limitation can be found on page 3, lines 27-28, page 4, lines 17-20, and various other locations.

Claims 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 18 require the pile fiber to be a thermoplastic. Support for these limitations can be found on page 3, lines 13-14, page 4, lines 2-3, and various other locations.

Applicant respectfully submits that the limitations described above are not taught or suggested by the prior art in the combination as presented.